

*Federal Woman's
Award Study Group
on Careers for Women*



**PROGRESS REPORT
TO THE PRESIDENT
March 3, 1967**

**FEDERAL WOMAN'S AWARD STUDY GROUP
ON CAREERS FOR WOMEN**

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. . . I am today announcing the establishment of a new group on careers for women.

This study group will be made up of women whose qualifications, I think, are very amply established, the recipients of the Federal Woman's Award since its establishment 6 years ago. I expect the members of this study group to probe deeply into the problems of the working woman. I want them to tell us which career fields appear to offer the greatest promise for our women.

I want them to tell us what our colleges and universities can do to help young women to prepare and to train for these fields. I want them to tell us what we can do to change the attitudes of employers toward hiring women. I want them to seek new ways of making government service attractive to women who have demonstrated ability.

The time has come for the American woman to take her rightful place in American society. We are about to take a major step toward that goal. . . .

**EXCERPT FROM REMARKS OF THE
PRESIDENT AT PRESENTATION OF
FEDERAL WOMAN'S AWARDS IN THE
WHITE HOUSE, FEBRUARY 28, 1966**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 8, 1967

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

**TEXT OF LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO
MRS. PENELOPE H. THUNBERG, CHAIRMAN,
FEDERAL WOMAN'S AWARD STUDY GROUP,
U. S. TARIFF COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.**

Dear Mrs. Thunberg:

I have considered the initial report of the Federal Woman's Award Study Group and have approved the recommendations you have made. The report clearly indicated that something must be done to further the program for women in the Federal service.

I have asked Secretary Wirtz to have the Interdepartmental Committee on the Status of Women give early consideration to the form of issuance of the proposed Executive Order. I have asked Chairman Macy to initiate immediate action on the other recommendations of the Study Group and to report to me by the first of July the progress made.

As a Nation, we cannot continue to afford through outmoded custom or attitude the senseless waste of the capability potential of American women. It is my firm intent, and I have expressed this many times since I became President, to have the Federal service truly exemplify equal opportunity for all in employment and advancement regardless of race, color, creed, national origin or sex. I am confident that the work of the Study Group will continue to contribute to the attainment of this objective.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lyndon B. Johnson

(Report attached)

**FEDERAL WOMAN'S AWARD STUDY GROUP
ON CAREERS FOR WOMEN**

PROGRESS REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

March 3, 1967

This progress report is confined to our considerations and recommendations with respect to careers for women in the executive branch of the Federal Government. This is the area in which our efforts, so far, have been primarily concentrated.

We sought, first, to appraise the position of women in the Federal Government at present; and, second, to discover through a special inquiry what departments and agencies already are doing to further your program for effective use of womanpower.

As a result of the active campaign that you have inspired, the climate for employing women in professional, administrative, and technical positions has become more favorable. Your appointments of women to many high-ranking positions, some of them never before held by women, have given recognition to the great variety of women's talents and abilities. More women have been recruited for Government service--especially young women--and more have been promoted, as the Federal Government has grown.

Despite these accomplishments, women still hold only a small fraction of the professional, administrative, and technical positions in the Federal Government. Because of inadequate data, we cannot be certain how their relative position has changed as Government employment has increased.

We therefore recommend the following actions which we believe could usefully be taken at this time to further your objectives:

1. Expeditious development by the Civil Service Commission of a Federal personnel reporting system to provide the comprehensive, continuing, comparative data necessary for a full appraisal of the position of women in Government.

2. Issuance of a new Executive order, or modification of the present Executive order on Equal Employment Opportunity, to reinforce actions already taken to prevent discrimination because of sex.

3. Review and modification of examination and qualification requirements by the Civil Service Commission to provide more flexibility in examination and to insure that appropriate credit be given for participation in community, cultural, social service, and professional association activities.

4. Development of programs throughout the executive branch especially designed to recruit women for part-time employment.

5. An annual review and assessment of each agency's program for more effective use of qualified women. Such a review would include agency recruitment policies for full- and part-time employment and career-advancement opportunities provided for women in professional, administrative, and technical positions.

Women's Role in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government

Over 650,000 women were employed full-time in the executive branch of the Federal Government on June 30, 1966, more than one-fourth of all full-time employees. The great majority of these women were in clerical or equivalent-level positions. Women occupy less than 5 percent of the professional, administrative, and technical positions in grades 12 and above.

Women in high-level positions

In the top echelons of Government, at the close of 1966 16 women held Presidential appointments to full-time positions in the executive branch at levels above grade 15. Among them were 5 Ambassadors, Assistant Secretaries of 2 departments, and 3 members of independent commissions. Women also filled more than 100 high-level part-time positions on boards, commissions, and committees to which they were appointed by the President.¹

In addition to Presidential appointees, there were 117 women in grades 16 through 18 or equivalent levels in full-time career positions in the executive branch of the Federal Government on December 31, 1966. The State Department had 28 and the Agency for International Development 7 women in these grades; Health, Education, and Welfare, 22; Veterans Administration and the Department of Labor, 6 each; and U.S. Information Agency, 5. A number of agencies had no women in these grades.²

By comparison, it appears that women now occupy about the same proportion of high-level positions (GS-16 to GS-18 and equivalent levels) as they did when these grades were first established. In 1949, the six

¹ A number of these women serve in more than one capacity.

² From a special survey of 30 agencies by the FWA Study Group supplemented by information provided by the Civil Service Commission. Excludes commissioned officers in the Armed Forces and members of other commissioned corps.

women in GS-16 to GS-18 positions held 1-1/2 percent of the 400 jobs so classified.³ In 1966, after successive large increases in the number of GS-16 to GS-18 and equivalent Federal positions, women still held about 1-1/2 percent of the total.⁴

Women entering the Federal service

At the entrance level the situation is encouraging. Increasing numbers of young women are taking the Federal Service Entrance Examination and being appointed to Federal positions. Over 35 percent of those who took this examination from October 1965 to June 1966 were women, and about one-third of the appointees from this list in 1966 were women. This represents a continuous increase since 1963, when only 29 percent of those who took the examination and 18 percent of those who were selected were women. Among the management interns selected in 1966, 25 percent were women, as compared with 14 percent in 1965.

The need for information

It is not possible to analyze completely or to appraise either the present status of women in the Federal service or the degree of improvement in their role in recent years because the necessary factual information is not available. Such an analysis requires data on the recruitment, employment, training, promotion, and separation of women in comparison with the totals for men and women in various grades and occupations. This information is needed to identify problem areas and areas of progress and to determine the causal factors which may be involved.

Principal among the problems encountered by the Study Group was the fact that the Civil Service Commission's statistical reports contain few comparable data for men and women. The definitions and coverage of these reports are so diverse that comparisons are virtually impossible, especially with earlier years. Our request for these data brought this problem to the attention of the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission who has initiated action to improve the quality and scope of the information reporting system.

We therefore recommend expeditious development by the Civil Service Commission of a Federal personnel reporting system to provide the comprehensive, continuing, comparative data necessary for a full appraisal of the position of women in Government.

³Included were two Presidential appointees: one at the GS-17 level and one at the GS-16 level.

⁴Figures from the Civil Service Commission are approximate and not strictly comparable with those for 1949.

The Matter of Prejudice

In response to your charge that the Study Group consider how the attitudes of employers toward hiring women can be changed, we addressed the matter of prejudice in the employment, training, and advancement of women in the Federal service.

A probing investigation made in 1963 for the President's Commission on the Status of Women⁵ revealed much about the extent of sex prejudice in Government. The apparent widespread negative attitudes of men concerning the capabilities of women for responsible assignments was clearly established. Objection to working with women, however, was less general among men who had had women supervisors or colleagues than among those who had not.

Fewer than five years having elapsed since that study, we did not expect to find evidence of revolutionary changes in these attitudes. Although your campaign has done much to alleviate the effects of this prejudice, the Study Group found that objections to hiring women for non-clerical positions, or to giving them opportunities to receive advanced training, or to promoting them to supervisory positions still persist at some levels. The persistence of these attitudes requires continuing counterbalancing pressures.

The Study Group believes that, in addition to the existing regulations and directives, further action can be taken which could help hasten the disappearance of such attitudes. Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act does not apply to the Federal Government. Executive Order No. 11246 on Equal Employment Opportunity, signed September 24, 1965, prohibits discrimination in Federal employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin, but excludes a reference to sex.

The Study Group believes that an Executive order providing equal employment opportunities for women would strengthen your program for the recruitment, employment, and career advancement of women.

We therefore recommend issuance of a new Executive order, or modification of the present Executive order on Equal Employment Opportunity, to reinforce actions already taken to prevent discrimination because of sex.

⁵ President's Commission on the Status of Women, Report on Federal Employment, Washington, 1963.

Recruitment for Professional, Administrative and Technical Positions

The need for highly trained labor in many fields is increasing rapidly. Our full employment economy is experiencing shortages in many occupations. It is imperative that the Federal Government tap all promising labor sources.

A year ago you said:

The under-utilization of American women continues to be the most tragic and the most senseless waste of this country. It is a waste that we can no longer afford. Our economy is crying out for their services. In the next decade alone we will need 900,000 additional school teachers and college instructors; 1 million additional specialists in the health services; 800,000 additional science and engineering technicians; 700,000 additional scientists and engineers; and 4-1/2 million additional state and local employees, exclusive of our teachers.

The requirements in these fields alone will be 110,000 additional trained specialists, every month for the next 10 years. That requirement cannot be met by men alone . . .⁶

Examination and qualification requirements

The Study Group believes that a sizable pool of experienced, mature talent is not presently being adequately tapped by the Federal service on either a part-time or a full-time basis because of current examination and qualification requirements. These requirements work to the disadvantage of educated, talented, and experienced women who seek to enter or resume careers in the Federal service, after an extended period of nongainful employment. Trained, mature women are often required to begin at the level for which they would have qualified the day they were graduated from college, without appropriate regard to the experience gained or growth achieved in those often demanding community activities which they have carried on in the intervening years.

The knowledge and experience gained in serving actively on a volunteer basis in community, cultural, social service, and professional association activities should receive adequate weight in qualifying for Government positions and should apply to a greater variety of occupations and positions than is now the case. While recognizing that the Federal civil service merit system is based on the principle of competition, the Study Group believes that a period of labor shortage necessitates a review of examination procedures and qualification requirements. We believe that the needed flexibility in both areas can be provided within the framework of existing laws. The Study Group will be pleased to consult with the Civil Service Commission in this effort.

⁶ White House Press Release, Remarks of the President at Presentation of Federal Woman's Awards in the Theater, February 28, 1966.

We therefore recommend review and modification of examination and qualification requirements by the Civil Service Commission to provide more flexibility in examination and to insure that appropriate credit be given for participation in community, cultural, social service, and professional association activities.

Part-time employment

Many women with professional and other specialized training would undoubtedly be available for Federal employment on a part-time basis if opportunities for part-time work were developed and publicized by the agencies. Among the 30 agencies surveyed by the Study Group, the Atomic Energy Commission, with 45 women in part-time professional, administrative, and technical jobs, and the Veterans Administration, with 1,329, have well-rounded, comprehensive programs.⁷ Most other agencies report no special efforts to employ women in these positions.

Those agencies with such programs have found their efforts rewarding. They have acquired skills in short supply. The women are highly motivated and perform at a higher than average level. Some part-time employees have been subsequently appointed to full-time positions.

In view of these successes, all agencies should be made aware of the advantages afforded by a program of part-time employment including the fact that part-time employees are not charged against an agency's full-time permanent employment ceiling. Federal recruiters and recruitment literature should publicize the availability of part-time employment to potential applicants.

We therefore recommend development of programs throughout the executive branch especially designed to recruit women for part-time employment.

Recruiting programs

The Civil Service Commission has an active college relations program with special emphasis on the recruitment of young women. We believe, however, that much more can and should be done to increase employment of women especially at the middle and upper grade levels. Nearly one-half of the agencies surveyed by the Study Group reported no activities especially directed toward the recruitment of women for professional, administrative, and technical positions.

⁷ Figures as of June 30, 1966.

Personalized recruitment campaigns and special publicity should be developed to interest women in career opportunities in the Federal service. High schools, colleges, professional organizations, and women's groups, in particular, should be furnished employment information on a continuing basis. Women employees in responsible positions should be utilized in various aspects of the recruitment process.

"Don't Lock Up Your Daughters"

For its part, the Study Group is now preparing a publication tentatively entitled "Don't Lock Up Your Daughters," describing the careers of FWA recipients to illustrate the attractive opportunities available in the Federal Government. It is designed for career counseling of students in high school and college, as well as for informing the general public of the work of women in Government. This project will further one of the purposes for which the Federal Woman's Award was founded; that is, to interest talented young women in seeking Federal careers.

Training programs

The Study Group sent inquiries to 30 agencies concerning management training. During fiscal year 1966, women at the GS-12 level and above participated in fewer than half the management training courses (other than those sponsored by the Civil Service Commission) in which men at the same grade levels participated. In the Civil Service Commission's management training programs, which covered all agencies in the executive branch, 133 of the 3,083 trainees at the GS-12 level and above, or 4.3 percent, were women.

Comprehensive program analysis

The wide diversity among agencies in personnel practices applying to women underscores the need for a thorough analysis of the effectiveness of the program for the advancement of women in the Federal service, both Government-wide and agency-by-agency. The Chairman of the Civil Service Commission should review the results of the analysis with the head of each agency.

This analysis should be made annually to determine progress, identify problem areas, and provide means for improvement. Particular attention should be given to the recruitment, employment, training, and promotion processes and activities in occupations and grades where relatively few or no women are serving. The Study Group would be pleased to assist in such an analysis.

We therefore recommend an annual review and assessment of each agency's program for more effective use of qualified women. Such a review would include agency recruitment policies for both full- and part-time employment and career advancement opportunities provided for women in professional, administrative, and technical positions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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